



# Arizona Game and Fish Department *Wildlife Matters*

March 2007

Volume V,  
Issue 3



## Agency Liaisons

### Legislative Liaison

Tony Guiles:

602-789-3280

[aguiles@azgfd.gov](mailto:aguiles@azgfd.gov)

### Asst. Legislative Liaison

Ben Alteneder:

602-789-3533

[balteneder@azgfd.gov](mailto:balteneder@azgfd.gov)

## OHV's on the Rise



## Bills Supported by the Commission

The Following Bills are supported by the Game and Fish Commission:

- **HB 2093/SB1355** *goldwater range; concurrent jurisdiction*
- **HB 2116** *big game permits; grandchildren*
- **HB 2117** *big game permits; transfers*
- **SB 1305** *veterans; disabled fishing licenses*

## Off-highway Vehicles on the Rise

PHOENIX — A bill that would raise more money for law enforcement, trail development, mitigating for damage and other costs associated with the management of off-highway vehicles in Arizona has passed its first hurdle at the state Legislature. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission commends the Arizona House of Representatives Natural Resources and Public Safety Committee for today's passage of House Bill 2443. If passed, this bill would not only increase funding for OHV programs, but it would also cut registration fees for hundreds of thousands of people who enjoy off-highway vehicle recreation in the state.

The off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation bill, sponsored by Dist. 12 Rep. Jerry Weiers, R-Glendale, was introduced to address the expanding popularity of OHV activities in the state. **OHV recreational use has increased by roughly 350 percent since 1998.** During this time, funding for off-highway vehicle recreation has grown by an average of only about 4 percent, not keeping pace with the dramatic increase in OHV recreation in Arizona.

House Bill 2443 provisions include:



- Additional funding to bolster resources for OHV management in key areas, including off-highway vehicle facilities, access, law enforcement, education and safety.
- New laws that will better protect Arizona's natural resources from inappropriate use of OHVs.
- Improved safety standards, including a requirement for individuals younger than 18 to wear appropriate headgear.
- An annual flat fee that significantly reduces the Vehicle License Tax for the registration of all-terrain vehicles. (\$3) This would:
  - Reduce costs to consumers.
  - Allow for "street legal" registration.
  - Include all-terrain vehicles (ATV), all-terrain cycles (ATC) and utility vehicles (UTVs).
- A dedicated funding source for OHV enthusiasts to protect opportunities to ride in Arizona for generations to come.

"The commission applauds the Arizona Legislature Natural Resources Committee for its commitment to protect Arizona's natural resources," said Arizona Game and Fish Commission Chairman Michael Golightly. "The expansion of the state's OHV fund would provide much-needed financial support for state agencies, user groups and local governments to protect wildlife habitat, while providing safe OHV recreation opportunities. Many OHV enthusiasts, sportsmen and wildlife conservationists appreciate this opportunity for Arizona to benefit from House Bill 2443."



Members of the Off-highway Vehicle Legislative Workgroup, comprised of OHV recreationists and outdoor user groups, land management agencies, county and local governments, and Arizona Game and Fish, worked together with Rep. Weiers to develop House Bill 2443.

"As a sportsman, I am very happy there is a piece of legislation that addresses the OHV issue," said John Koleszar, a member of several conservation groups. "It addresses habitat preservation and law enforcement, as well as funding for trail development."

Apache County ATV Roughriders President Hank Rogers added, "This bill is an excellent opportunity to elevate the issue of dedicated funding for OHV management, and to point out the need to fund proactive trail development and educational opportunities and outreach."

## Condor Release



### Condors to be released into the Wild

PHOENIX - Once every spring, people can gather in Arizona for a unique opportunity that very few other states offer: to witness the release into the wild of endangered California condors. The public is invited to attend this year's release on Saturday, March 3 at 11 a.m. when seven condors will be released at the Vermilion Cliffs National Monument.

"We are excited to kick off another year of the program by celebrating the 26th release of California condors with friends of the program," says Chris Parish, condor field project supervisor with The Peregrine Fund, the group releasing the birds. "The condor breeding season is underway, and the first breeding pair of condors this year has laid an egg in a remote area of the Kaibab Plateau."

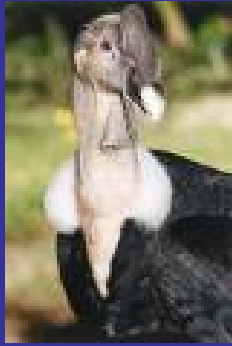


The California condor has gone from only 22 birds left in the world in 1982 to nearly 300 today. The original 22 birds were captured in an effort to breed and save the species. Condors bred and raised in captivity are now periodically released at sites in California, Mexico and at the Vermilion Cliffs in Arizona.

"The California condor is one of the great endangered species successes in the country, and to be able to share that with the public is very rewarding," says Kathy Sullivan, a condor biologist with the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "It is exhilarating to watch the birds fly free and to share their story with others."

Condors were added to the federal endangered species list in 1967. The condor is the largest flying land bird in North America. The birds can weigh up to 26 pounds and have a wingspan of up to 9 1/2 feet. Condors were first reintroduced in Arizona in 1996, and they now number 57 in the state. Visitors at the Grand Canyon and Vermilion Cliffs may be able to observe the birds, especially during the spring and summer.

To view the condor release, drive north on Highway 89 out of Flagstaff. Turn left (west) onto Highway 89A toward Jacob Lake and the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. Drive about 40 miles past Marble Canyon until you turn right onto House Rock Valley Road (BLM Road 1065). Travel



## March Events

about three miles to a shaded viewing area on the right. On top of the cliffs to your east will be the location where the condors are released. The release site is approximately one mile from the viewing point, so those interested in attending may want to bring binoculars or a spotting scope.

The condor reintroduction in Arizona is a joint project of many partners, including Arizona Game and Fish Department, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Peregrine Fund, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Kaibab National Forest and Utah Division of Wildlife Resources.

For more information on California condors, visit [azgfd.gov/condor](http://azgfd.gov/condor).

### March Key Dates & Events

#### **March 3, 11, 17 and 25, 2007**

**8:30 a.m.**

March Guided Birdwalks

March is migration time and you can expect to see dozens of different species on a birdwalk at Boyce Thompson Arboretum. Guided birdwalks alternate on the first and third Saturday and also the second and fourth Sunday during March and April. Walks are included with adult admission of \$7.50, or \$3 for ages 5-12. The Arboretum is located at U.S. 60, milepost 223, about one hour due east of Phoenix.

#### **March 3, 2007**

**4:30 p.m.**

Southern Arizona National Wild Turkey Federation Banquet

Hunts, wildlife art, jewelry, bronzes and so much more at this affordable event at the Doubletree Hotel in Tucson. The doors open at 4:30 p.m.- dinner at 6 p.m.. Bring the whole family. We support the kids and have fun for them, too. A single ticket is only \$55 (couples \$80) and both include a year's NWTF membership. Kids are only \$20 and include a JAKES membership. If you support our Hunting Heritage and believe the future is in our kid's hands, come join us for a fun evening. Contact Ralph Anderson at (520) 247-4659 for tickets and more information.

#### **March 3, 2007**

**5:00 p.m.**

Valley Longbeards National Wild Turkey Federation Banquet

Hunts, wildlife art, jewelry, bronzes and so much more at this affordable event at the Phoenix Mountain Preserve in Phoenix. Doors open at 5:00 p.m.- dinner at 6 p.m.. Bring the whole family. We support the kids and have fun for them, too. A single ticket is only \$75 (couples \$110) and both include a year's NWTF membership. Kids are only \$25 and include a JAKES membership.





If you support our Hunting Heritage and believe the future is in our kid's hands, come join us for a fun evening. Contact Rich Williams at (602) 881-6815 for tickets and more information.

**March 5-6, 2007**

**6:30 a.m.**

Western States Triple Crown 3-D Archery Tournament

This is the second leg of the Western States Triple Crown 3-D Archery Tournament. It is a two day event sanctioned by the Arizona Bowhunters Association. Visit [arizonabowhunters.org](http://arizonabowhunters.org) for more information.



**March 6, 2007**

**7:30 p.m.**

Birds of Thailand

Bob Witzeman is well known for his informative presentations. He recently went on a Field Guides tour in Thailand, lead by a resident of that country. Bob says that the digital bird shots are high quality - done by digiscoping birdwatcher fanatics. Their guide also sent him an awesome collection of digiscoping shots taken over a period of time while leading trips. This should be a wonderful trip around Thailand with its fantastic wildlife. Meetings are held in Dorrance Hall at the Desert Botanical Garden. The Garden is located at 1201 North Galvin Parkway in Phoenix, which is approximately 1/2 mile north of the Phoenix Zoo. Dorrance Hall is located off the main parking lot and entry to the Garden. There will be signs directing you to the meeting.

**March 9-11, 2007**

**12:00 p.m.**

International Sportsmen's Expo

Arizona's largest sportsmen's show is heading to the state's most state-of-the-art sports venue. Visitors to the 2007 International Sportsmen's Expo will enjoy a diverse gathering of outdoor products and services ranging from a fly-fishing "how to" center and casting pond to game-calling contests, sporting dog arenas and the latest in fishing tackle and hunting gear. An estimated 400 exhibitors will take part in the three-day ISE-the largest event of its kind in Arizona. Show visitors can browse through huge displays of the latest, cutting-edge gear for the hunter, angler and family camper, all at great show prices. The newest "toys" for on-the-water or off-the-road will also be available. In addition, outdoor enthusiasts can attend more than 100 expert-led seminars, try new products, and even test their skills in one of the show's contests. Some of the special features planned for 2007 include: • NEW: Outdoor-survival clinics by Greg Davenport • NEW: Fly-Fish How-To Center • NEW: State Trophy Display • Fishing Theater Seminars • Hunting Theater Seminars • Aquarium Demo Tank • Game-calling Contest • Sporting Dog Arena • Fly Casting Pond & Contest • Arizona Game & Fish Education Pavilion • Youth Fair & Family Activities Tickets are \$12 and are available at the show or online, now, at the show's Web site. Children 12 and under enter for free.



Free on-site parking.

**March 10, 2007**

**5:00 p.m.**

Northern Arizona National Wild Turkey Federation Banquet

Hunts, wildlife art, jewelry, bronzes and so much more at this affordable event at the Elks Lodge in Flagstaff. Doors open at 5:00 p.m.- dinner at 6:30 p.m.. Bring the whole family. We support the kids and have fun for them, too. A single ticket is only \$55 (couples \$80) and both include a year's NWTF membership. Kids are only \$15 and include a JAKES membership. If you support our Hunting Heritage and believe the future is in our kid's hands, come join us for a fun evening. Contact Michael Higdon at (928) 527-0047 for tickets and more information.

**March 16, 2007**

**5:00 p.m.**

Friends of the NRA Dinner/Auction

The format is simple-food, fun, family and fund-raising. Whether you are a hunter, competitive shooter or just a proud gun owner, Friends of NRA events have something of interest for the entire family. Events include dinner followed by exciting auctions and special drawings for unique and collectible merchandise. Attendees bid on items from the standard Friends of NRA merchandise package, as well as special products and services donated to specific events by local businesses and community members. The dinner donation is \$50.00 and will be held at the Chaparral Suites Hotel at 5001 N. Scottsdale Rd. Scottsdale, AZ. Contact Dave Osborn at (602) 620-1923 or Marci Welton at (602) 571-4055 to make reservations.

**March 17, 2007**

**4:00 p.m.**

Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society Fundraising Banquet

Celebrate the Arizona Desert Bighorn Sheep Society's 40th Anniversary at our 24th Annual Fundraising Banquet at the El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium in Phoenix. March 17th is the date, so mark your calendars and buy your tables now. Come out and help us help Arizona's sheep and have a great time while you're at it. Preparations are under way for some great looking 40th Anniversary gear to go with the usual array of live auction opportunities, Silent auction bargains and excellent assortment of firearms and gear in our Bucket and General Raffles. We'll also have another fine ladies raffle and many other chances to win. Of note, the Arizona Game & Fish Commission's Special Rocky Mountain Bighorn Tag and the Special Antelope Tag will kick off our live auction. Phone bidders are welcome. If you can't attend, your tax deductible cash donation not only will help us defray expenses associated with putting on the banquet, but you will receive a 40th Anniversary ADBSS plaque to commemorate the occasion. Plaque size will vary with the donation level, from \$100 to \$499, and \$500 on up. For more information on the event, or phone bids, write or call Jim Unmacht at [hunttheworld@cox.net](mailto:hunttheworld@cox.net) or (623)

570-0534. For tickets, contact Tracey Martin at [assnmgmt1@cox.net](mailto:assnmgmt1@cox.net). See you on St. Patrick's Day.

**March 24, 2007**

**7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

Welcome Back Buzzards

Celebrate ornithology and help the staff and volunteers at Boyce Thompson Arboretum say "hola, amigos" as the seasonal flock of turkey vultures returns from their Winter migration in Mexico. On this special day the Arboretum opens at 7:00 a.m., so arrive early - the resident vultures typically spend each morning from dawn until about 8:00 to 8:30 a.m. basking on Magma Ridge before gliding away to spend their day foraging. Watch the vultures, then learn about other birds on our 8:30 a.m. guided birdwalk. Arizona Game & Fish Department wildlife rehabilitation volunteers will have a living display of animals, birds, and reptiles from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. near the Smith Building.

**March 31, 2007**

**5:00 p.m.**

Yavapai Yelpers National Wild Turkey Federation Banquet

Hunts, wildlife art, jewelry, bronzes and so much more at this affordable event at the Yavapai Downs Racetrack at the Fairgrounds in Prescott Valley. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. - dinner at 6:30 p.m. Bring the whole family. We support the kids and have fun for them, too. Tickets are only \$60 and include a year's NWTF membership. Kids are only \$25 and include a JAKES membership. If you support our Hunting Heritage and believe the future is in our kid's hands, come join us for a fun evening. Contact Steve Sams at (928) 848-4549 for tickets and more information.



For additional information about *Wildlife Matters* Legislative Publication contact:

Ben Alteneder, Assistant Legislative Liaison

Arizona Game and Fish Department

602-789-3533

[balteneder@azgfd.gov](mailto:balteneder@azgfd.gov)

*Department Staff have contributed to this publication in the form of articles and photographs.*

February 1, 2007



**Wildlife Matters**

Legislative Affairs